

JAN 1 1960

President For Step-Up In Information Service

Indorses Hitherto Secret Report; Some Criticism Made of U.S.I.A.

By James E. Warner

WASHINGTON, Jan. 11.—President Eisenhower tonight indorsed a report saying United States information activities must be vastly stepped up because "The 1960s may prove to be one of the most convulsive and revolutionary decades in several centuries."

He praised the report of his special Committee on Information Activities Abroad, headed by Mansfield D. Sprague, former Assistant Secretary of Defense and now vice-president of the American Machine and Foundry Co., New York, for its ten-month study.

The President specifically singled out for indorsement the committee's urgent recommendation that United States information activities be increased particularly in Africa and Latin America.

In a press conference at the White House Mr. Sprague said his group had not been investigating the United States Information Agency, but its report, some of which remained classified as nineteen pages of excerpts were made public tonight, contained some blunt

criticism of present policies of the U. S. I. A. and other American agencies charged with giving the world a proper reflection of American aims.

Most novel of the committee's recommendations was a proposal for establishment of a national security institute to train top officers as a sort of national psychological war college. If this is not done, the Sprague group said more extensive training should be given to information officers with existing facilities.

The document, similar to one which was given to President Eisenhower in 1953, originally was classified, Mr. Sprague reported, but the President ordered that all possible information in it be released, as was done today. The released version contains about 40 per cent of the total text of the report, and its "guts," Mr. Sprague said. He added that the only contents remaining classified dealt with observations about "sensitive countries or areas abroad" rather than with anything which could cause criticism in the United States.

"Since World War II the principal overseas information agency of the United States government (currently called the U. S. I. A.) has been renamed six times and re-organized four times, the report said. "It has been in the past subjected to great year-to-year variations in its appropriations, much to the disadvantage of long-term programs, effective planning, and needed personnel development.

Problems Noted

"A mere listing of some of the principal characteristics of the information system will indicate how heavy and difficult some of its problems are. It embraces a wide variety of mass media, cultural, educational and exchange programs.

"The scale of activity must be large enough to meet urgent requirements in every major region of the globe: No politically significant area can be ignored. Operating responsibilities must necessarily be distributed among several agencies, whose efforts must

"The system must have affirmative as well as defense capabilities—sound and vigorous programs in all media for presentation of United States policies and programs, and facilities to counter the moves and expose the purposes of the Soviet apparatus."

To these ends, the committee said, the over-all United States information policy must be "progressively expanded for some time to come" and the executive branch should seek Congressional approval for this.

President Impressed

Among other matters, the committee recommended an extension of overseas education programs, including the teaching of English and the possibility that private, as well as public funds, might be used in this field; continuance and expansion of the exchange of persons program, including those with Soviet bloc countries, and better explanation abroad of United States military and foreign aid programs.

Accepting the report, the President said: "I am impressed by the comprehensive nature of the study and the breadth and

vision which characterize it. As you know, I am asking that study be started on it at once by the departments and agencies concerned. Also, I am having it placed in the permanent records of the government, readily available for future use.

"With much of the report, and a great many of its conclusions and recommendations, I am in full and instant accord. I think it is a document of exceptional value to an informed understanding of this subject. . . . It deserves—and I hope will receive—wide attention."

Members of the committee in addition to Mr. Sprague are: C. D. Jackson, former psychological warfare assistant to the President; Philip D. Reed, General Electric executive; Livingston T. Merchant, Under Secretary of State for Political Affairs; George V. Allen, director U. S. I. A.; Allen W. Dulles, director Central Intelligence Agency; Gordon Gray, special assistant to the President for national security affairs; Karl G. Harr Jr., special assistant to the President for security operations co-ordination; John N. Irwin II, Assistant Secretary of Defense for International Security Affairs, and Waldemar A. Nielsen, executive director.